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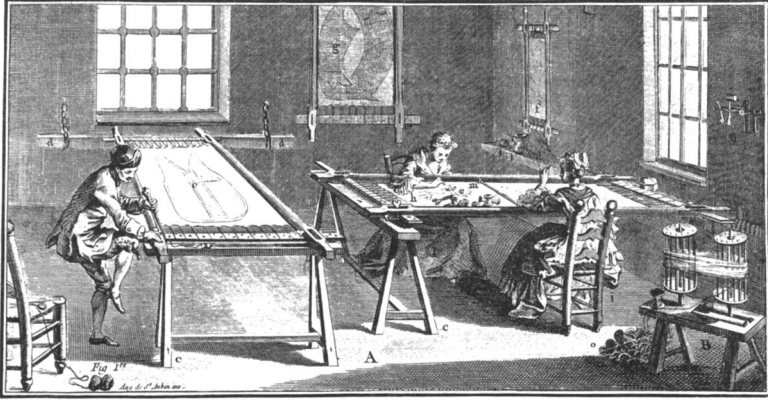
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THE PLUS QUALITY OF ART

THE hand-work which gave such great value to the decorative arts of olden times can play but a small part, owing to economic reasons, in the industrial arts of our own time. For the great majority of us, our household furnishings must be made by machinery. Yet this is not so discouraging as some would have us think. Because much that has been produced by machinery is ugly, we must not forget that machine-made industrial arts can be beautiful.

They *must* be beautiful if American manufacturers are to win supremacy, or even hold their own, in the international competition which will follow the war. We shall have a great opportunity, but that alone will not mean success. When the choice is between two manufactured articles equally well made, at the same price, it is fairly safe to say that preference will be given by people of taste to the one which has in addition the quality of beauty. It is this *plus* quality of artistic worth which we must have more and more abundant in our American manufactures.

The responsibility of bringing this about rests with us all. We can not leave it to the manufacturer alone. It is his function to satisfy our demand. But we are responsible for the nature of that demand and for the support we are ready to

give it. If we are indifferent to art, our industries will be equally indifferent. If we do not support the American manufacturer when he does create beautiful things, we can not blame him if he gives up the effort. Now is the time to challenge and overcome this attitude of indifference before it works irreparable damage.

How to do it? Every time we buy a piece of furniture, a curtain for the window, a rug for the floor, any object in which the element of beauty may enter, we must insist that it be beautiful, and we must give made-in-America goods their fair chance. Insist loud enough and long enough and in large enough numbers, and retailers and manufacturers will hear us. Only we must also know what we are insisting about.

Here is where the museum comes in. In familiarizing the public with what is beautiful in the arts of decoration, the art museum makes perhaps its most valuable contribution to the public weal. Through its magnificent collections of decorative art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art is doing just this. It is offering to its thousands of visitors an opportunity, unparalleled in this country, for the study and enjoyment of the many varieties of beauty which are possible in the industrial arts. And through the wide-spread influence it exerts upon public taste, it is helping to "*win the war after the war now.*"

J. B.